

Historic District Review Committee

Staff Report
July 12, 2010

Action Item

CAPP 2010-0016 Ortiz-Bell: Remove Front Deck and Replace with Front Porch in the Goose Creek Historic District: PIN 491-27-7785.

Background

The applicant proposes to remove a late twentieth century deck on the west (main) elevation of the residence and replace it with an entry porch on the subject property, 37285 Bolyn Road, in the Goose Creek Historic and Cultural Conservation District (Figure 1). The primary building on the 9-acre property is a circa 1930s dairy barn converted in the 1970s into a dwelling (Photo 1). The barn has a standing seam metal gambrel roof. The first story is stone and the gambrel ends are clapboard-clad frame. Trees and a privacy fence line Bolyn Road in front of the property, and the main building is only visible from the road at the entry drive.

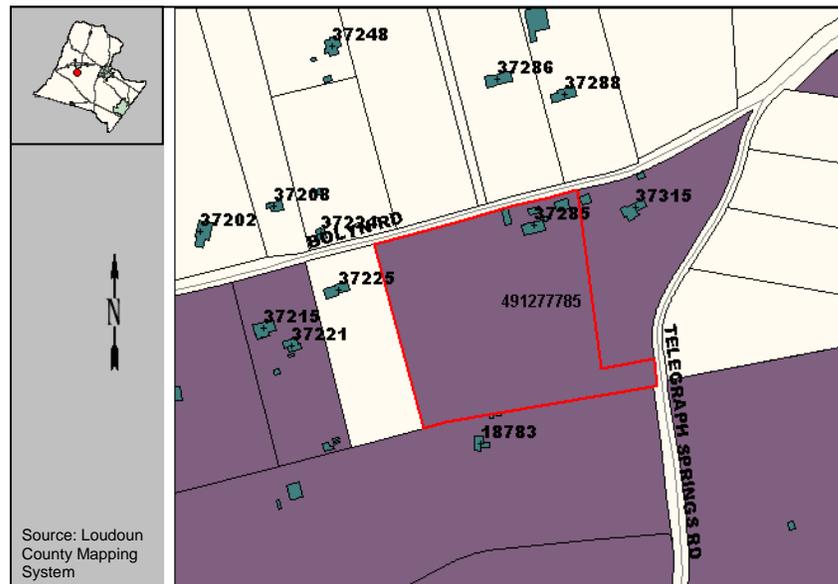


Figure 1: Subject property, 37285 Bolyn Road, in the Goose Creek Historic District.

According to the Zoning Referral letter dated July 2, 2010, there are no zoning issues associated with this application.

Analysis

The Guidelines for Demolition (Chapter 10), Guidelines for Existing Structures (Chapter 6), Guidelines for Additions (Chapter 5) and the Guidelines for New Construction

(Chapter 4) in the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines: Goose Creek (Goose Creek Guidelines) will be used to evaluate this application.



Photo 1: Converted barn on the subject property, 37285 Bolyn Road, in the Goose Creek Historic District.



Photo 2: Deck proposed for removal at 37285 Bolyn Road.

Deck Removal

The applicant proposes to remove a deck constructed in the 1970s and expanded in the 1980s that serves as the front entry into the converted barn. The applicant states in the Statement of Justification (SOJ) that the deck is in need of repair and the entry porch does not provide enough protection from the weather. The intent is to replace the deck with an entry porch that has a smaller floor area and is entirely under roof.

The appropriateness of demolition in a historic district is evaluated against the Goose Creek Guideline's Demolition Criteria. Primarily, the significance of the building and its contribution to the district should be considered when determining the appropriateness of demolition. The deck was added to the building in the 1970s, when the barn was converted into a residence, and expanded and modified with an entry porch in the 1980s. Consequently, the deck and entry porch are not significant additions that contribute to the subject property or the Goose Creek Historic District. Removal of the deck will not adversely affect the significance of the property or the district as a whole. Furthermore, the applicant is proposing to replace the deck with a smaller entry porch that will be more in keeping with the barn. Therefore, the existing deck meets the criteria for demolition (Goose Creek Guidelines: Guidelines for Demolition and Removal – Demolition Criteria a., b., e., i., and j., pg. 146).

Entry Porch

The Guidelines for Porches on existing buildings speak primarily to retaining existing porch elements on historic buildings and reconstructing or repairing porches and porch elements using physical or documentary evidence. They also note that new porches should not be added on primary elevations and that decks are not encouraged in

historic districts (*Goose Creek Guidelines, Guidelines for Existing Structures: Porticos, Front and Rear Porches, Guidelines 1-4, p. 113, Inappropriate Treatments 5 and 6, p. 112*).

The applicant proposes to construct an entry porch on the western gable end (side) of the converted barn. The barn is oriented with the roof peak parallel to Bolyne Road; therefore, the gable end is a secondary elevation even though it accommodates the main entrance. The entrance is elevated approximately 4 feet above the ground, requiring steps (and a porch) for access. The footprint of the new porch is 10 feet wide by 6 feet deep, significantly smaller than the existing deck that spans the entire west elevation. Removing the existing deck will, therefore, eliminate an inappropriate feature and expose a large portion of the first-story stone that has been hidden since the 1980s. Considering these factors, the proposed porch is an acceptable element. Furthermore, the converted barn is minimally visible from the road.

Since porches are not typical elements found on utilitarian buildings such as barn, the Guidelines for Decks offer direction for designing and constructing an appropriately utilitarian entry porch. The Guidelines recommend painting pressure treated wood in a color that is in keeping with the house and using typical porch designs, such as adding a roof, constructing deck piers and wrapping them in brick or stone, and/or screening the area beneath the deck with lattice. The Guidelines also suggest using plantings to screen the deck from the public right-of-way (*Goose Creek Guidelines, Guidelines for New Construction: Decks, Guidelines 3a, 3b, 3d, 4 - 5, p. 75*). The Guidelines for Additions also provide recommendations that are appropriate to the porch design.

Roof

The porch roof will have an 8/12 pitch. It will have a standing seam metal roof repainted green to match the roof of the barn. The applicants state in the Additional Question responses that they designed the porch with a roof pitch that is not as steep as the existing portico in an effort to be more compatible with the barn while taking into consideration snow load. However, the proposed pitch does not match any of the pitches of the gambrel roof. Matching the pitch in the peak of the barn (approximately 6/12) would meet the intent of the Guidelines while creating a visual connection between the barn and the porch (*Goose Creek Guidelines, Guidelines for Additions: Roof, Guidelines 1 and 2, p. 86*). A 6/12 pitch is a pitch that would meet the building code according to the County's Building Inspector.

To further create a design connection with the historic barn, the applicants state in the Additional Question responses that they will be incorporating details into the porch roof found in the eave overhang of the barn (Photo 3). The gable will have a 12-inch rafter overhang and an 18-inch deep eave that will both be left open to expose the roof structure. Exposed structural elements include 2-inch by 8-inch rafters and tongue and groove roof decking that is similar in dimension to the existing roof decking. Incorporating architectural details found on the historic barn meets the Guidelines for

Additions (*Goose Creek Guidelines, Guidelines for Additions: Materials and Details, Guideline 1, p. 86*).



Photo 3: Roof overhang details and balustrade at 37285 Boly Road.

Balustrade and Posts

The balustrade on the porch and steps will match the existing balustrade (see Photo 3). The balusters will be pressure treated pine and spaced less than 4 inches apart. The posts will be 6-inch-by-6-inch pressure treated pine posts. The balustrade design and simple posts are appropriately utilitarian and do not attempt to incorporate more highly styled porch elements, meeting the Guidelines. The posts and balustrade should be painted or stained in a color scheme that matches the house to meet the Guidelines.

Floor and Steps

The proposed porch floor will be 2-inch-by-6-inch pressure treated boards. The steps will have a 14-inch tread with a 6-inch riser and

constructed of pressure treated wood. Both elements are appropriate for this utilitarian building; however, to meet the Guidelines, the floor and steps should be painted or stained in a color scheme that matches the house.

Foundation

The porch foundation will be partially exposed (approximately 4 feet) and constructed of concrete masonry units (CMU) on the north and west sides. The applicant states in the Additional Question responses that the purpose of a solid foundation is to deflect water runoff, as the land on this side of the building slopes toward the barn. The CMU will be parged and covered with diamond lattice. The area beneath the steps and the south side will also be infilled with lattice. The lattice will be framed to differentiate the corners and edges.

Using lattice to screen the area beneath a porch is typical and recommended in the Guidelines. However, the Guidelines recommend building a deck on piers, rather than a solid foundation, following traditional porch construction techniques. To be more in keeping with historic precedents and the barn materials, the porch should be supported with piers wrapped in stone. Lattice would appropriately infill the space between the piers.

If stone wrapped piers are incorporated into the design, then the stone and mortar should match the stone and mortar in the first story of the barn to meet the Guidelines for Materials (Goose Creek Guidelines, *Guidelines for Materials: Stone and Brick, Guidelines 2 and 7, p. 127*).

Findings

1. The existing deck is not a historically significant part of the building; therefore, its removal meets the Criteria for Demolition.
2. The proposed porch is on a secondary elevation. Its size and design are an improvement over the existing deck. An elevated entry feature is necessary to access the residence. The building and proposed porch are minimally visible from the public way. Therefore, the proposed porch is acceptable even though porches are not typical of historic barns.
3. The porch roof slope should match a slope found in the gambrel roof to meet the Guidelines and create a visual connection with the historic building.
4. Using structural elements from the barn roof rafter and eave overhangs in the porch roof will visually connect the porch, an element not typical of barns, with the historic building, and decrease the visual effect of this modern element.
5. The roof, floor, step, balustrade, post, and lattice dimensions and materials proposed for the addition meet the Guidelines.
6. Leaving pressure treated wood that is visible from the public way unpainted does not meet the Guidelines.
7. The use of a solid foundation is not typical of porches. Stone-wrapped piers would be more appropriate porch supports and meet the Guidelines.

Recommendation and Conditions

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. The slope of the porch roof should match the top pitch of the barn's gambrel roof.
2. Paint or stain all pressure treated wood elements in a color scheme that relates to the converted barn.
3. Construct piers beneath the deck wrapped in stone and mortar that match the existing stone. Infill the area beneath the piers with diamond lattice made of painted wood.

Suggested Motions

1. *I move that the Historic District Review Committee approve Certificate of Appropriateness 2010-0016 for the removal of a deck and construction of an entry porch at 37285 Bolyn Road in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Goose Creek Historic and Cultural*

Conservation District based on the findings included on page 5 of the staff report dated July 12, 2010...with the following conditions (see conditions on page 5)...

- 2. I move that the Historic District Review Committee approve Certificate of Appropriateness 2010-0016 for the removal of a deck and construction of an entry porch at 37285 Bolyn Road in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Goose Creek Historic and Cultural Conservation District based on the findings included on page 5 of the staff report dated July 12, 2010...*
- 3. I move that the Historic District Review Committee defer Certificate of Appropriateness 2010-0016 for the removal of a deck and construction of an entry porch at 37285 Bolyn Road in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Goose Creek Historic and Cultural Conservation District based on the findings included on page 5 of the staff report dated July 12, 2010, giving the applicant the opportunity to incorporate the conditions into revised plans in order to meet the Guidelines.*
- 4. I move alternate motion...*